

DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL

ANNUAL
REPORT

OF

Medical Officer
of Health
FOR 1938

G. H. H. WAYLEN, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.
Medical Officer of Health for the Devizes Rural Sanitary District

DEVIZES
Wiltshire Gazette Printing Works
1939

DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1938

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District.

I am endeavouring to follow out the lines suggested in circular No. 1728 issued by the Ministry of Health to you on 25th October, 1938.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient Servant,

G. H. H. WAYLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

41, Long Street, Devizes.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in Acres—63,515 acres.

Population as estimated by the Registrar-General—12,230.

Number of inhabited houses at end of 1938—3,357.

Rateable Value—£49,790.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£216 11s. 7d.

Social conditions—Area is entirely an agricultural one. Unemployment negligible.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	M.	F.	TOTAL.
Live Births	83	81	164
Legitimate	82	79	161
Illegitimate	1	2	3

Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population—13.4.

Live Birth Rate for England and Wales—15.1.

	M.	F.	TOTAL.
Stillbirths—			
Legitimate	3	2	5
Illegitimate	—	—	—

Rate per 1,000 births—29.0.

	M.	F.	TOTAL.
Deaths from all causes	79	71	150

Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated population—12.26.

Adjusted Death rate—9.15.

Comparability factor—0.75.

Death rate for England and Wales—11.6.

Deaths from Puerperal causes:—

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	Nil
Other Puerperal causes	...	...	...	Nil
Puerperal death rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...	Nil
From Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	Nil
From other Puerperal causes	...	...	...	Nil

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:—

	M.	F.	TOTAL.
All Infants	5	3	8
Legitimate	5	3	8
Illegitimate	—	—	—

Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births—48.7.

Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births—48.7.

Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births—Nil.

Deaths from Measles —

Deaths from Whooping Cough 1

Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age ... 1

Deaths—44 % to Diseases of circulatory system; 8.7 % to Cancer; 15.3 % to Respiratory Diseases.

There was no excessive or unusual mortality during the year calling for comment. The stillbirth rate may be disregarded, as the figures are so small that the rate must vary widely from year to year.

Sixty-six deaths were attributed to diseases of the circulatory system, 13 to Pneumonia, 2 to Tuberculosis, and 13 to Cancer. The low Tuberculosis figure is satisfactory.

CAUSES OF DEATH RETURNED BY REGISTRAR- GENERAL, 1938.

Causes of Death.	Male	Female	Total
Deaths.	—	—	—
1—Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	—	—	—
2—Measles	—	—	—
3—Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
4—Whooping Cough	1	—	1
5—Diphtheria	—	—	—
6—Influenza	1	2	3
7—Encephalitis Lethargica	—	—	—
8—Cerebro-spinal Fever	—	—	—
9—Respiratory Tuberculosis	1	1	2
10—Other Tuberculosis	—	—	—
11—Syphilis	—	—	—
12—General Paralysis of the Insane, tabes dorsalis, etc.	—	—	—
13—Cancer, Malignant Disease	7	6	13
14—Diabetes	—	1	1
15—Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.	1	3	4
16—Heart Disease	25	21	46
17—Aneurysm	—	1	1
18—Other Circulatory Diseases	5	10	15
19—Bronchitis	5	4	9
20—Pneumonia (all forms)	10	3	13
21—Other Respiratory Diseases	1	—	1
22—Peptic Ulcer	—	—	—
23—Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years)	—	1	1
24—Appendicitis	—	—	—
25—Cirrhosis of Liver	—	—	—
26—Other Diseases of Liver, etc.	—	—	—
27—Other Digestive Diseases	1	2	3
28—Acute and Chronic Nephritis	2	4	6
29—Puerperal Sepsis	—	—	—
30—Other Puerperal Causes	—	—	—
31—Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, Malformations, etc.	3	1	4
32—Senility	2	2	4
33—Suicide	1	—	1
34—Other Violence	5	5	10
35—Other Defined Diseases	8	4	12
36—Causes ill-defined or unknown	—	—	—

Special causes—Small Pox, Poliomyelitis, Polio-encephalitis—Nil.

General Provisions of Health Services for the Area.

Medical Officer—G. H. H. Waylen, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab. (part time).

Sanitary Inspector—S. C. Drabble, C.R.S.I.J.B., M.S.I.A. (also Building Surveyor and Water Engineer).

Assistant Sanitary Inspector (temporary)—

F. Lockwood, C.S.I.B., 31st January to 30th July, 1938.

D. Howells, C.S.I.B., 19th September, 1938, onwards.

1. *Laboratory Facilities.*—No alteration.

2. *Ambulance Services.*—(a) The Rural Sanitary District is served as to general sickness by the Devizes Borough Ambulance.

(b) The Devizes and Pewsey Joint Isolation Hospital Committee supply the ambulance used for infectious sick.

3. *Nursing in the Home.*—Nurses supported by District Nursing Association available over most of area.

4. *Clinic and Treatment Centres.*—(a) The Devizes Orthopædic Clinic treated cases from the area during 1938.

(b) Some cases from Rural District also attend at Infant Welfare Centre at Devizes.

Hospitals.

i. *Voluntary.*—Devizes and District Hospital.

543 in-patients treated during 1938, 246 coming from the Devizes Rural District. Average number of patients in hospital, 25.1; out-patients treated, 721. Expenses have risen, partly owing to increased salaries of Staff, and the year ended with a considerable adverse balance of over £800.

ii. *Public.*—Devizes and Pewsey Joint Isolation Hospital.

ADMISSIONS DURING THE YEAR 1938.

Diseases	Devizes Borough	Devizes Rural District	Pewsey Rural District	Other Admin- strative Areas	Total
Scarlet Fever	20	16	10	...	46
Diphtheria ... ..	...	2	6	1	9
Infective Paraotitis	3	...	...	...	3
Erysipelas	1	...	2	...	3
Measles ... ..	...	1	2	...	3
Pneumonia ... ..	...	...	1	...	1
Streptococcal Throats	2	...	...	...	2
Other Diseases ... ..	...	...	1	...	1
Observation... ..	4	3	...	...	7
	30	22	22	1	75

Three deaths occurred as follows:—1 from Bronchic-Pneumonia and Whooping Cough, aged 1 year; 1 from Influenzal Broncho-Pneumonia complicating Pulmonary T.B. (this case occurred in your District, and is one of the two tuberculous deaths recorded); a third from Peritonitis simulating Enteric Fever. The observation cases included a severe quinsy, a non-diphtheritic Laryngitis, contacts of scarlet fever cases with sore throats but no rash. The mumps cases were all nurses from the Devizes and District Hospital. As will be evident from the above table, a number of cases, some for observation, others not statutorily notifiable, but infectious, were usefully admitted. Without the new Cubicle Block this could not have been done.

Prevalence of Infectious Disease.

Notifiable Diseases during Year 1938

DISEASE	Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox ... ..	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	18	16	...
Diphtheria	2	2	...
Enteric Fever (inc. Paratyphoid) ... ..	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ... ..	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	...	...
Pneumonia	10	9	5
Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	...	...	...
Encephalitis Lethargica ... ..	...	...	...
Dysentery	11	11	4

Notifications of Pneumonia, though more frequently made, are still useless for statistical purposes, *e.g.*, of the 13 deaths attributed to this cause in the Registrar-General's returns, five only were previously notified. The Dysentery cases all occurred at the Wiltshire County Mental Hospital, and the deaths were transferred to other areas.

1938 was a healthy year.

Of the ten notified cases of Pneumonia 3 occurred among inmates of the Wilts County Mental Hospital.

Sanitary Circumstances of Area.

1. Water.—

Total number of private consumers—664.

Total number of Farms and Business Premises—90.

Total figure—754.

Amount consumed during 1938 (approximately)—13,700,000 gallons.

The supply is satisfactory in quality and quantity, and the reserve capacity is such that an increase in consumption of five times more than the present figure could be adequately supplied.

Special safeguards are taken by the Water Engineer (Mr. Drabble) to assure the purity of the supply. Among the precautions taken the following are typical examples:—

- (i) Almost continual sampling is carried out at numerous points on the forty miles of mains.
- (ii) Workmen employed on work at the borehole and reservoir have had a blood test to ascertain that they are not likely to contaminate the supply by acting as a "Carrier" for any disease.
- (iii) An adequate supply of chlorine is kept at the Pumping Station, and used after any operations, adjustments, repairs, etc., affecting the supply.
- (iv) All main extensions are chlorinated for a considerable period after first coming into use.

In many other small matters precautions are taken, and I feel certain that so long as these methods continue the water consumers attached to the Great Cheverell supply are assured of a constant vigilance as to the purity of the water they drink.

Well Supplies.—Existing well supplies are still being used, and in some parishes, notably Seend, I am not at all satisfied with the general

purity. It cannot be too strongly stressed that the increasing use of main water supplies will tend to further deteriorate the quality of shallow well water in spite of any precautions taken.

2. *Drainage and Sewerage*.—There is a growing need of sewage disposal systems in the more urban parishes.

3. *Rivers and Streams*.—No action required or taken.

4. *Closet Accommodation*.—Pail closets mainly in use in villages. There are very few old-fashioned privies about, and these are gradually being done away with.

5. *Public Cleansing*.—Collection and disposal of household refuse is done by contract under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector. Night soil and ashes are disposed of by occupiers.

The district is a scattered one, and up to date no regular staff has been engaged for above purposes.

6. *Eradication of Bed Bugs*.—One case dealt with by contact disinfection.

7. *Shops Act*.—No action called for during the year.

Sanitary Inspection of Area.

The Sanitary Inspector's report appended.

1. *Schools*.—The sanitary conditions generally good. Water supplies generally suitable.

Housing.

Commencing at the end of January, Mr. Lockwood, Assistant to the Sanitary Inspector, systematically inspected old houses in Potterne, Worton, Market Lavington, West Lavington and Easterton. These were subsequently inspected by Mr. Drabble and myself. Finally they were viewed by a special Housing Sub-Committee of your Council appointed December 21st, 1937, and classified as below.

To be dealt with as Clearance Areas—52; in 10 Clearance Areas.

A.—Houses to be demolished without question, i.e., those whether by reason of site or structure are unfit to live in ...	25
B.—Houses which unless radically repaired at great expense are only fit for demolition ...	77
C.—Houses which require considerable repair, but which are otherwise suitable dwellings ...	11
D.—Houses which by reason of their architectural or picturesque merit should not be demolished, yet which require considerable repair ...	5
X.—Houses in Categories A or B above and occupied by owner-occupiers of advanced years, which may be allowed to stand for the life of the present occupier and on condition that no children are brought up therein ...	6

A total of 176 houses were thus inspected and classified.

40 more houses are due to be repaired by owners as a result of informal action.

79 Crown properties in the Bishops Cannings area were also inspected; though three of these properties were so unfit as to obviously demand demolition, many were in a bad state of repair, needing extensive reconditioning and in some cases the provision of essential amenities.

Schedules of repairs needed were made out and sent to the Crown Agents in October, 1938.

Official representations on the Clearance Areas were made to the Council on December 6th, and application made to the Ministry of Health for confirmation. Of these areas, two presented difficult problems. At

Potterne Butts, 10 closely interlocked properties in different ownership on a very restricted site, with rear quarters badly ventilated and lighted, could only be dealt with in this way.

Another large area comprised a group of 14 dwellings again generally interlocked, and situated at the Market Place, Market Lavington. These properties all suffered from disrepair and lacked essential needs.

The remaining areas were smaller groups situated as below:—

Oak Lane, Easterton, No. 1 Clearance Area, 1938.

White Street, Market Lavington, No. 3 Clearance Area, 1938.

The Butts, Potterne, No. 4 Clearance Area, 1938.

High Street, Potterne, No. 6 Clearance Area, 1938.

West End, Potterne, No. 7 Clearance Area, 1938.

White Street, West Lavington No. 8 Clearance Area, 1938.

Malthouse Cottages, West Lavington, No. 9 Clearance Area, 1938.

Newtown Cottages, West Lavington, No. 10 Clearance Area, 1938.

Housing (Rural Workers) Acts.

Grants were sanctioned by the Wilts County Council in respect of fifteen cottages in your District during 1938, and the work of reconditioning was completed in 13 cases.

The existence of these Acts is brought to the notice of owners, and every facility given them to make use of it where their properties are liable to reconditioning.

The year has thus been one of real progress towards Housing betterment.

Factories and Workshops.

See Sanitary Inspector's report.

Tuberculosis

New cases notified and deaths during 1938, exclusive of inmates of the Wilts County Mental Hospital.

AGE PERIODS.	NEW CASES				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 Year ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1 Year ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 Years ... ..	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
15 Years ... ..	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
25 Years	1	2	...	...	...	2	...	...
35 Years	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45 Years ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
55 Years ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 Years ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTAL	2	3	2	1	...	2	...	...

Number of cases on Tuberculosis Register at 31st December, 1938 :—
 Respiratory. Non-Respiratory.

M.	F.	M.	F.
9	6	6	8

No action was taken by me with regard to Tuberculous employees in the milk trade.

No action was taken by the Council under Sec. 62 P.H.A., 1925.

INSPECTOR'S REPORT

HOUSING ACT, 1936.

Statement of work carried out during the year ended 31st December, 1938, under the above Acts, in the Devizes Rural District.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-Houses during the year:—

- (1) (a)—Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 326
 (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 1211
 - (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... 306
 (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 1180
 - (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... 81
 - (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 249
- (In respect of some of these Demolition Orders may be served if Owners decline to carry out Schedules of repairs.)

2.—Remedy of Defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ... 11

3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—

- (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—
 - (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil
 - (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—
 - (a) By Owners ... Nil
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners ... Nil
- (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—
 - (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... Nil

- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—
- (a) By Owners *Nil*
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners *Nil*
- (e) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 29
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 2
- (d) Proceedings under Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
- Houses included in Clearance Areas 52
- (e) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
- (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made *Nil*
- (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit *Nil*

4 —Housing Act, 1936.—Part IV.—Overcrowding.

- (a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 13
- (2) Number of families dwelling therein 13
- (3) Number of persons dwelling therein 117
- (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 5
- (c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 3
- (2) Number of persons concerned in such cases 22
- (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding *Nil*

Housing Accommodation—Year 1938.

Total built—14.

Privately with State assistance—*Nil*.

By Local Authority with State assistance—*Nil*.

By Private Enterprise without State Assistance—14.

Factories and Workshops.

There are 31 Factories and 52 Workshops, as below:—

FACORIES.				
Bakelhouses	...	...	...	4
Brickworks	...	...	...	3
Dairy	...	...	...	1
Engineering	...	...	...	7
Fruit Preserving	...	...	...	1
Grist Mills	...	...	...	5
Joinery	...	...	...	5
Laundry	...	...	...	1
Saw Mills	...	...	...	4
				31

WORKSHOPS.

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	18
Blacksmiths	...	...	...	...	7
Boot Repairing	...	...	...	...	2
Cycle Repairing	...	...	...	...	5
Harness Making	...	...	...	...	3
Joinery	...	...	...	...	12
Laundry	...	...	...	...	1
Plumbing	...	...	...	...	1
					<hr/>
					49
					<hr/>

1.—Inspection of Factories and Workshops.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspection.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	47	...	...
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	87	...	...
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' Premises)	...	...	...
Total	134	...	...

2.—Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars.	Number of Defects		Referred to H.M. Inspector or prosecutions instituted.
	Found	Remedied.	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts:</i>			
Want of cleanliness ...	7	7	...
Want of ventilation ...	1	1	...
Overcrowding ...	...	...	...
Want of drainage of floors ...	1	1	...
Other nuisances ...	...	...	...
Sanitary accommoda- tion:—			
insufficient ...	1	1	...
unsuitable or defective ...	1	1	...
not separate for sexes ...	...	...	...
<i>Offences under the Fac- tory and Workshop Acts:</i>			
Illegal occupation of underground bake- house (sec. 101) ...	...	...	...
Other offences ... (Excluding offences relating to outwork and offences under the secs. mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories & Work- shops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921)	...	...	...
Total ...	11	11	

Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.

The number of persons registered as Cowkeepers, Dairymen or Wholesale Purveyors of Milk is 319.

There are 58 registered Retail Purveyors of Milk.

The number of farms and other premises registered as Dairies is 319. 620 inspections were made during the year.

Meat Inspection.

As a result of inspections under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, 1,620lbs. of meat intended for human consumption was voluntarily surrendered and destroyed.

Summary of Work done in the Sanitary Inspector's Department during the Year 1938.

Total number of inspections recorded ...	...	...	2353
Informal notices served ...	...	...	43
Informal notices complied with ...	...	...	24
Informal notices from previous year ...	...	...	14
Statutory notices served ...	...	...	Nil
Slaughterhouses limewashed ...	...	...	4
Legal proceedings taken ...	...	...	—
Water closets constructed for new property ...	...	...	20
Earth closets constructed for new property ...	...	...	1
Additional W.C.'s constructed for old property ...	...	...	4
Additional E.C.'s constructed for old property ...	...	...	3
Privies converted to E.C.'s ...	...	...	—
New house drains laid ...	...	...	—
Drains cleansed or repaired ...	...	...	34
Wells cleansed or repaired ...	...	...	5
Contaminated well water supply replaced by main ...	...	...	4
Foul ditches cleansed :—			
By Council ...	...	...	4,400 yards
By owners ...	...	...	1,250 yards
Heaps of refuse removed ...	...	...	47
Dwelling-houses limewashed and cleansed ...	...	...	2
Bakehouses limewashed ...	...	...	11
Slaughterhouses limewashed ...	...	...	4

S. C. DRABBLE,

Sanitary Inspector.

